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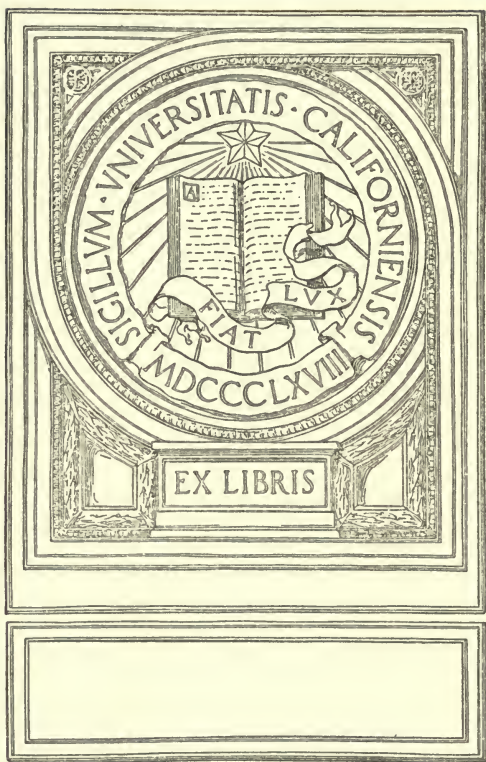


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To John
from his sister
Louise

THE
B U R N I N G
OF
SCHENECTADY,
AND
OTHER POEMS.

~~~~~  
By ALFRED B. STREET.  
~~~~~

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TO

THE REV. THOMAS C. REED, M. A.,

PROFESSOR IN UNION COLLEGE,

This Volume

AS A SLIGHT TESTIMONIAL OF SINCERE AFFECTION

IS INSCRIBED BY HIS FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

M501530

PREFACE.

The following poem is principally descriptive, with a slight thread of narrative, and a few incidents interwoven, illustrating the rude period of the event designated by the title.

The author has endeavored throughout, to draw the scenes in keeping with the characters and customs of frontier life. Based upon a well known occurrence, the poem does not aim at the continuous interest of a tale, but consists merely of a collection of sketches drawn around, but generally connected with, the principal event.

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STATISTICS II

1. The following data represent the number of hours per week that a sample of 100 students spend studying for their statistics course.

10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 46 48 50

52 54 56 58 60 62 64 66 68 70 72 74 76 78 80 82 84 86 88 90 92

94 96 98 100 102 104 106 108 110 112 114 116 118 120 122 124 126 128 130 132 134

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THE

BURNING OF SCHENECTADY.

I.

Our young wild land—the free—the proud!

Uncrush'd by power—unaw'd by fear,
Her knee to none but God is bow'd,

For Nature teaches Freedom, here.

Thus, when Oppression's legions came,
Each heart leap'd up in quenchless flame :

Valley and mountain, to the strife,

Gave, and renew'd the destin'd free,
Each sword a hearth-wall—every life

A Dragon's tooth for Liberty.

II.

With baubled brow, but fetter'd hands,
And kingly hound-fangs in his side,
Actæon Europe, tottering, stands
Mid Art and Nature's loftiest pride.
Manacled shapes of wrong and pain,
Are crush'd beneath each gorgeous throne,
Though jewell'd purple hides the chain,
Though incense-music drowns the moan ;
Temples, where Genius hath enshrin'd
Its triumphs, breathe their memories round;
But sacred temples of the mind,
In ruins strew'd, are likewise found.

III.

Our young wild land—we turn to her—
Her star and Freedom's, merg'd in one;
As turns the Eastern worshipper
To yield his offering at the sun.

From gloom and snow, to light and flowers,
Expands this heritage of ours:
Life, with its myriad hopes, pursuits,
Spreads sails, rears roofs, and gathers fruits;
But pass two fleeting centuries back;
 This land—a torpid giant—slept,
Wrapp'd in a mantle thick and black
 That o'er its mighty frame had crept,
Since stars and angels sang, as earth
Shot, from its maker, into birth.

IV.

Though of the past, from no carv'd shrines,
 Canvass, or deathless lyres, we learn,
Yet arbor'd streams, and shadowy pines
 Are hung with legends wild and stern:
In deep dark glen—on mountain side,
 Are graves, whence stately trees have sprung,

Nought telling how the victims died,
Save faint Tradition's faltering tongue.

V.

Tradition—fireside history—told
By trembling age to eager youth,
Wild dreams, in memories dim and cold,
Blent with scarce less wild scenes of Truth;
Yet, 'tis a soft and silvery light,
The moon of dark oblivion's night;
Bathing the turrets of the past,
But leaving shadows black and vast,
Giving the statued niche its look,
But massing phantoms in the nook,
Tinting the ivy till it twines
In laurels, round the dusty shrines,
But casting not a ray to trace
The darkness of the dungeon's space.

VI.

We seek no theme, where Europe broods
In chains o'er helpless misery :
But in our own green glorious clime,
Where roll our streams, and wave our woods,
And towers man's soul erect and free,
Tradition-taught, we weave our rhyme.

VII.

An August day—a dreamy haze
Films air, and mingles with the skies,
Sweetly the rich dark sunshine plays,
Bronzing each object where it lies,
Till stream and tree and rocky pyre
Seem lit with streaks of dusky fire.
Outlines are melted in the gauze
That Nature veils; the fitful breeze,

From the thick pine low murmuring, draws;

And that light Comus of the trees

The aspen, as the balmy rover

Creeps by, with mirth is quivering over;

The bee is slumbering in the thistle,

And, now and then, a broken whistle

A tread—a hum—a tap—is heard

Through the dry leaves, in grass and tree,

As insect, animal and bird

Rouse, briefly from their lethargy:

Then, e'en these pleasant sounds would cease,

And a dead stillness all things lock,

The aspen seem like sculptur'd rock,

And not a tassel-thread be shaken

The parent-pine's deep trance to waken,

And Nature settle prone in drowsy peace.

VIII.

The misty blue—the distant masses,

The air, in woven purple glimmering,

The shiver transiently that passes
O'er the leaves, as though each tree
Gave one brief sigh—the slumberous shimmering
Of the red light—invested seem
With some sweet charm, that soft, serene,
Mellows the gold—the blue—the green
Into mild temper'd harmony,
And melts the sounds that intervene,
As scarce to break the quiet, till we deem
Nature herself transform'd to that of Fancy's dream.

IX.

A narrow valley, wall'd by mountains—
A winding river gliding through,
Lucid as though its silver fountains
Were born from, and were fed by dew—
Here, spreads its mirror to the day,
Round thicket-isles with pointed sands,
To which, the crane, on watch for prey,

Wades, and with neck low arching stands.
There the thick alder-branches weave
A verdant net beside, across,
So dense and dark as scarce to leave
Glimpse of the water's sliding gloss.
Along, are scattered willow-groups,
Their yellow sprays the surface tipping,
And, roots half loose, half clinging, stoops,
The elm, its slant boughs deeply dipping,
Making the stream with bubbles wroth
That, wheeling into coverts deep,
Mingle to clumps of snowy froth,
Whence, flakes detach'd, slow melting, creep:
The forest, in tall column'd ranks,
Forming mass'd backgrounds to the banks.

X.

Near a smooth marge, whose grassy brinks
Dip to the water's ripple-links,

A square back-slanting palisade
 Around a hamlet rude is trac'd ;
An octagon loop'd fortress, made
 Of trunks, within one angle placed :
Here, the slim brown-brick dwelling towers,
 With terrac'd gable—sharp, steep roof,
 Walls iron-letter'd,—turret-vanes,
 Sashes of lead, and diamond panes,
And there, the rough log-fabric cowers,
 As scarce to keep the storms aloof.
The trader's stooping shed appears,
 Broad swings the tavern-sign in air ;
While, midst of all, the stone church rears
 Its long low frame, and belfry square.

XI.

Around the palisade a space,
Of human toil, bears smiling trace :

In phalanx deep, the plume-tipp'd maize
Brown fringe, and green sheath'd ear, displays,
Beside, the umber rye field stands
With tribute for the reaper's hands :
Here, meadow with its shaven brow,
Here, field just furrowed with the plough ;
There—the huge broad-leaf'd vine surrounds,
 Its globes roll'd out on slender stems,
The green potatoe's cluster'd mounds
 Just bursting into purple gems :
Then, spreads, with scatter'd bush and rock,
 The pasture's short thick sward of grass,
Where stamping steed, and nibbling flock,
 And cropping herd, slow moving, pass.
Here, up the hill, a ghastly glade,
Block'd from the green surrounding shade,
Of the keen axe, shows recent fruits,
In chaos-heaps of trunks and roots;
There, the fierce fires have claim'd their spoil

From off the burn'd and blacken'd soil,
Save where dark stump, and cinder'd tree,
Stand, spectre-like, and mournfully.

XII.

Round this half wild, half rural scene,
Stretch'd boundless, like the billowy deep,
In differing shapes and shades of green,
The forests, thick and trackless, sweep.
In hollows dark, the hemlocks con'd,
Pines, with tall trunks, on summits thron'd,
Maples upon each sloping ridge,
Elms, that the waters, fringe and bridge,
Dense laurels, filling swamps, with screens,
And fir-trees slanting o'er ravines.

XIII

The forest cinctur'd spot is rife
With pleasant sights and sounds of life.

Groups dot each grass-strip'd village street,
 Hammer and saw and scythe are ringing,
From field, come neigh, and low, and bleat,
 On mountain-lot the axe is swinging,
By river-side, is poled along
The rough batteau, with laugh and song,
Whilst o'er the mossy root-strewn road,
 The Indian, with his furs, is treading;
And oxen, to the call and goad,
 Issue from vistas each side spreading.
A frontier picture ; but a germ
 Of that wide-branch'd prosperity,
Top, green and high—base, wide and firm,
 Whose ripen'd fruits now bless the free.

XIV.

The beamless sun enlarges now,
Upon the western mountain's brow ;

His orb is broken into gems
Red twinkling through the leaves and stems ;
Viewing the quiet loveliness,

Two figures seek the river's side,
One with blue eye and auburn tress,
And one in manhood's strength and pride.

Arm lock'd in arm, they roam along,
Now listening to the thresher's song,
Now watching, where some straggling ray,
Touches of light, casts round their way :
Love coloring all things with its glow,
Blending their hearts in one sweet flow
Of music, lengthening to their gaze,
A future of sweet happy days;
Like some fair landscape that we see,
Soft tinted into harmony,
Stretching away, and melting bright
Within a blaze of golden light.

XV.

Sybrant, the lily's purple gem,
Gathers from its long spotted stem,
 To wreath in Lyntie's glossy hair,
Or points, where on the western haze
The trees seem fusing in a blaze
 Like gold dust sparkling through the air.

XVI.

Wild is their walk; the stream, beyond
Spreads to a broad and mirror'd pond;
The muskrat, at the coming foe
 His burrow seeks with splashing leap,
His pathway, through the ooze below,
 Shown by a line upon the deep:
The otter darts, in backward slide,
Down the steep gravelly water side:
From yon deep nook, where boughs o'erlean,

And melts the light in golden green,
The duck, her yellow brood, leads out,
Dipping their tiny bills about,
At the quick waterspider's bound,
And the gray gnat swarms dancing round.

XVII.

The river then, through pine trees tall,
 Leads to a wide spread placid sheet
Dome sprinkl'd, with a low broad fall,
 The timid beaver's wild retreat.
Here, on the banks, the sapling gnawing
There, for the dam the branches drawing
Now peering from their huts of clay
Now sporting on their liquid way
The tenants of the little lake,
 Each in its sphere of bustling strife
This lonely spot of Nature, make
 A mimic scene of human life,

But as strange footsteps press the brink,
Dark heads within each hovel shrink,
Shapes swiftly glide from tree and bough,
Quick plunges ring the basin's brow,
And, o'er the water and the wood,
Silence sleeps deep with solitude.

XVIII.

Homeward they turn—green roofs o'erhead,
And cluster'd thickets round them spread ;
A blossom glows to Lyntie's eyes,
Aside she turns to gain the prize,
Back she recoils with sudden cry,
 From the dense thicket, wild and fierce,
Gleams, on her startled gaze, an eye,
 That seems her very soul to pierce.
As Sybrant rushes to her aid,

A form steps quickly from the shade ;
" 'Tis but La Moyne, his friends to greet,"
A voice exclaims, in accents sweet.
With smiles, and kindly words, the pair
Their welcome to the comer bear ;
Tall and erect his form—his brow
 Though of deep passions, wearing trace,
With pleasant smiles was brighten'd now,
 And o'er his mien shone courtly grace.
As on the three pursued their way,
He charm'd the walk with converse gay ;
Much had he mingled in the strife,
And seen the pomp and glow of life;
Ardent and eloquent, his tongue
Around his thoughts a magic flung
That, without seeming art, beguil'd
The untaught dwellers of the wild.
Oft had he been the hamlet's guest,
Lending its simple life a zest,

Till all, in friendship's chain, were bound,
And welcomes glad, from all he found.
The scout, secur'd an ear to hark
Of winding trail and ambush dark,
And heard, in turn, the stranger tell
Of battlefield, and citadel :
The hunter, found a listener keen,
To toilsome chase in forests green,
And thrill'd at triumphs won, where reigns
The lion on his desert plains,
And e'en the trader's shanty, strew'd
With furs, and bales, and baubles rude,
Re-echoed to a merry throng,
As plied La Moyne, tale, jest and song.

XIX.

With wide expanded feet, like wings,
The flying squirrel shoots his way,
And grating on its tiny strings,

The cricket shrills its evening lay;
The crossbill tolls its curfew near,
Tinkling, like silver, sweet and clear,
The other air-boats, moor'd in nest,
Twitter and chirp themselves to rest;
Observant of each sight and sound,
La Moyne directs attention round;
As youth and maiden turn, his eye
From his drawn brows, would flash and roll,
Lit by a spark that seem'd to fly
From fiercest burnings of his soul.
At Lyntie as it gleams, the light
Is passion in its wildest might;
But as o'er Sybrant shoots the glare,
Hatred deep, demonlike, is there.

XX.

But now their quicken'd footsteps beat
The hamlet's wide and straggling street;

The west with second pomp is bright,
Though in the east the dusk is thickening,
Twilight's first star breaks forth in white
Into night's gold each moment quickening,
The red-sleev'd boatman, to the shore,
Fastens with withes his long batteau;
On slant-roof'd stoop—by half-swung door,
Matron and sire enjoy the glow
Glancing from off the looks that Day
Turns back upon his downward way.
With shoulder'd axe, and greeting speech,
The woodsman saunters from the hill,
And from the grainfield's nodding reach
The reaper comes with whistle shrill,
And soon, each pointed pane shows bright
That household star—the candle-light.

XXI.

The golden solstice passes by
With long soft twilights—glittering days,

Autumn's rich garb and gorgeous sky
And Indian Summer's purple haze
Quick vanish, as the stormy North
Sends the fierce Tyrant, Winter, forth,
To pall the air—strike Nature dumb,
And guard with robes her slumbers numb.

XXII.

Another picture—mountain-wall—
Valley and river, spread below,
Late fresh and bright with summer, all
Now cloth'd in one wide sheet of snow:
Showing a pale and ghastly scene,
Save where pines left their spires of green,
And surly hemlocks, pointing high,
Braid network masses on the sky.
The arch soars o'er in dazzling blue,
No cloud to dim the sapphire hue.

And where the boundless sunshine streams,
Flash diamond showers,—dart shifting gleams.
The village roofs, beneath the glare,
 Glitter like slanting silver plates,
Rises the palisaded square
 Mound-bas'd and capp'd with frozen loads,
While snow piles block the open gates,
 Where, each way, stretch the trodden roads.
The rough grim fort looks darkly out
From deep banks curv'd and heap'd about,
And, lifts the church its belfry-vane
O'ercrusted with a frosty chain.

XXIII.

Beside the trader's log shap'd walls,
Where, with light warmth, the sun-beam falls,
Which, the slow plashing droppings tell
From every tinted icicle,

Soldiers and villagers around,
With here and there a panting hound,
A group of weary hunters stands,
Just breathing from their forest toil,
Their rifles propp'd beneath their hands,
Whilst round them lie their wild-wood spoil:
The brindled panther, late crouch'd grim
And moaning, on the covert-limb;
The deer, this morn, that bounded swift
O'er the chok'd runway's treacherous drift;
From his block'd swamp the wolf, and bear,
Rous'd, dizzy, in his torpid lair.

XXIV.

The well-known tempting porch within,
Strides the red Mohawk, proud and shy,
Spreading his glossy beaver-skin
Before the trader's scanning eye,

Who greets, in turn, the Indian's sight,
With blanket gay, and trinket bright.

XXV.

At length the wearied trader treads,
His shanty lock'd with bolt and bar,
To where its warmth his hearth-fire sheds,
And wing'd thought seeks his home afar :
His "father land," still lov'd, he sees,
Its vineyards trembling to the breeze,
And purpling in the sunshine warm,
He hears the swift crag-castled Rhine
Dashing—he starts—day, sinking low,
But glimmers on a waste of snow,
The sound is surging from the pine
Swung wildly by the rising storm.

XXVI.

The guard-room of the fort—the walls
Pierc'd with long narrow loops, and hung
With scabbard, bayonet-sheath and plume;
The fire on steel clasp'd muskets falls
And in faint wavering glance is flung
O'er the deep nook'd, high rafter'd gloom.
On benches stretch'd, a soldier-throng
Listen, in careless ease, to one
Whose skin garb'd figure lithe but strong,
Sharp features tann'd by wind and sun,
And eye of keen and shifting flame,
The frontier scout, half wild, proclaim.
In speech uncouth, quick gestures eking,
He tells them of an unknown trail
Struck, whilst, this morn, a moose-haunt seeking,
And traced in snow o'er hill and vale
Till branching in such devious ways
It baffled e'en his practis'd gaze.

But wrapp'd in false security
They drown his voice in jibing glee;
To none his tale hath credence brought,
Though every dwelling has been sought,
And all the village dames have seen
An Indian group, of foreign mien,
With eyes, that stealthily survey'd
Dwelling, and fort, and palisade,
Straying around, though bearing each
Burthens of skins, yet mute in speech,
Save answering brief to every quest,
They were but traders from the west ;
Oh little did sweet Lyntie deem,
 As at one form she glanc'd uncaring,
La Moyne's fierce eyes, from out the gleam
 Of masquing paint, were on her glaring.
And little did brave Sybrant know,
 On this, his joyous bridal day,
There stood his deepest deadliest foe
 Exultant o'er the destin'd prey.

XXVII.

The stooping sun has found a shroud
Within a thick gray rising cloud:
A damp and chilling wind is fluttering
Through the slight softening air, and muttering
In low sounds, down a wild ravine
Whose sides jut out in rocky ledges,
And either hand, huge pine trees lean,
Grasping, with snakelike roots, the edges,
Shaping a bristling bower o'erhead,
Scarce pervious to the winter snow,
Where frozen moss, and pine-fringe, spread
Carpets, of brown and green, below:
In summer, tis a fair retreat,
Sleeping in shadows, cool and sweet,
The breeze, the murmuring branches, tossing,
The fitful streaks of sunshine crossing,
With chirping of the flitting bird,
As steps, the brooding silence, stirr'd ;

A place for day dreams, e'er the heart
Has felt its fresh green spring depart,
Leaving an arid waste instead,
Of blighted hopes, and feelings dead.

XXVIII.

A large wild looking throng of men
Is gather'd in that shelter'd glen,
Cloth'd in the Indian's warlike dress,
To tread the winter wilderness,
Cassocs of hair around them lac'd,
With knife and hatchet at the waist,
The bullet-pouch and powder horn
Around each brawny shoulder borne:
Tall muskets slung upon their backs,
Or plac'd for instant use in stacks,
With beaver's fur the temples capp'd,
Thick deer-skin leggins downward wrapp'd

To the quill'd moccasin's warm sheath,
The broad flat snow-shoe thong'd beneath.
Yet though alike the features show
The war-paint's black and crimson glow.
A steadfast scrutinizing gaze,
The whiteman, in his oval face,
And Indian, in his serpent blaze
Of eye, and bony cheeks, could trace.

XXIX.

The kindled pine-knots, spattering, stream,
Dimm'd by the sun, in pallid gleam.
To feed the pile high blazing, some
Cleave splinters, blister'd thick with gum,
Or from the faded hemlocks near,
Their wither'd bark of tinder peel,
While others, from a slaughter'd deer,

Busily dress their forest meal.
Some couch upon the frozen ground,
Some launch their tomahawks around,
Where twisted root, and bending tree
Stand, fancied, for an enemy.

XXX.

But now, quick striding forms, they note
Along the hollow's darkening throat.
They hail the band with guarded shouts,
La Moyne returning with his scouts!
The seeming traders, that so free
Thy precincts trod, Schenectady!
Oh hadst thou not the danger scorn'd,
Of which the trail too truly warn'd,
Nor scoff'd at him, whose instincts caught
The woe with which its sight was fraught,

Then hadst thou scap'd the flame's red breath,
Despair, and agony, and death.

XXXI.

Day, in the lowest west now cowers,
The lustrous mantle with him borne
That, since his flight on wings of hours
From the east's portal, he had worn.
In place, the dull thick cloud has spread
Its dusky blotting haze o'erhead,
Close narrowing the horizon's bound;
While a few snow-flakes, swerving, sail,
Like blossoms, that the breath of May
Shakes from the white garb'd cherry-spray,
Then thickening to a light, loose veil
Woven of spangles, fluttering round:
Wilder the flakes chaotic teem
Until the gauzy atoms stream

In slant lines downwards steadily
On mountain, valley, roof and tree,
Save when the wind, now rising fast
To the full fury of a blast,
Fitfully sweeps the gray streak'd haze
Into a dim and whirling maze.
The village dwellings scarcely show
Their outlines in the mist of snow:
Round the church belfry, whirls and floats
A quivering swarm of silvery motes,
And a white netlike curtain falls
Across the fort's large looming walls.
No colors tell the daylight's pass,
But darkness thickens to a mass.
The blast, arous'd, sweeps wildly by,
First, with far moan and wailing cry,
Then in fierce shocks, like surges sent
Dashing across the firmament.
High o'er the deep ton'd rush, a clear

Keen piercing whistle strikes the ear,
As though the blast, by fiends bestrode,
Shriek'd wild beneath their torturing goad.
Through the black gloom, hurl'd clouds of snow
Spinning aloft and dashing low,
Shoot in an instant flash of white,
Athwart the gazer's dizzy sight.

XXXII.

The pines, as sweeps the tempest o'er,
Now roll out sounds like ocean's roar,
Now hiss, as though they sought, in rage,
 Tossing their strong arms high and free,
Fierce freedom-striving war to wage
 Against their rushing enemy.
In circling robes of scatter'd snow
They twist and bend in struggling throe
As falls the drifted avalanche,

They tremble to their inmost branch,
Then, shaking off their loads, again,
They wild renew the conflict vain.

XXXIII.

Hours creep apace—the storm more wild ;
More high the drifts are dash'd and pil'd,
And thicker, through the pall of night,
Flakes stream and whirl in ghastly white.

XXXIV.

Within a hut of logs, around
 Its hearth, the hunters group together:
They hear the madden'd tempest's sound—
 They mark the frost the casement feather—
The crackling fire casts glances red,
Upon the rafters cross'd o'erhead,

On huge moose-antlers, ruddy shines,
Chequers the garments from their tines,
Bathes paw of bear, and panther's tusk,
 Otter's, and beaver's glossy hides,
And water-rat's brown skin of musk,
 Hung round the cabin's bulging sides,
While in the corners of each wall
Are group'd the rifles slim and tall:
The hounds are crouching by the blaze,
Slow winking in their dozing gaze,
Hearing the drops of sap exude
In shrill hiss, from the steaming wood.
Within, the rich warm ruby light,
Without, the black cold stormy night,
Contrasting, kindle in the breast,
Feelings of comfort and of rest.

XXXV.

In slumber wrapp'd, the trader lies,
The wind-steed's trample through the skies

And other noises of the night

People his dreams with visions dread,
That awful rush ! is that the flight

Of the Hartz-demon, vengeance-led,
From his black haunt, his wrath to wreak?
Is that the flying victim's shriek?

Are those wild sounds, its mournful cries
As talon-grasp'd, it slowly dies?

The slumberer wakes—the sweeping blast

Bears on the panther's thrilling scream,
The wolf's sad howl is lengthening past,

The mystic voices of his dream,
And as the visions leave his brain,
Into deep rest he glides again.

XXXVI.

Circling a table—flagon-strew'd—

The soldiers sit in jocund mood.

Around the fort the tempest howls,
Thick solid seeming darkness scowls,
But what reck they ? with song and shout

Merrily speeds the festive scene,
Loud laughter greets the tawny scout
As starting, when, more shrill and keen
Swells on the ear the furious gale,
He mutters of the morning's trail.

One, the most reckless of the band

Viewing the scout with scornful eyes,
Fierce smites the table with his hand,

And swinging high his goblet, cries
" Fill, comrades, fill, the wine is bright!
We'll drink the soldier's life to-night.

Sing, comrades, sing, the wind shall be
The chorus to our harmony.

This talk forbear, no trails we fear!
Thy boding's nought—no foe is near!

A guardian kind is Winter old!

He rears his barriers, white and cold,

His frozen forests fill the track
Between us and fierce Frontenac.
Hark to the blast, how wild his sweep!
He shouts his chorus strong and deep;
How beats the snow! we envy not
This bitter night, the sentry's lot.
Our comrades at the gates, must feel
The driving sleet, like points of steel!
Fill, and let thanks to Fortune flow,
For wine and fire, not blast and snow.
Fill, till the brim is gleaming bright,
We'll drink the soldier's life to-night!"

XXXVII.

Merrily sounds the music strain!
Merrily tread the bridal train!
Merrily, merrily, song and jest
Echoes find in every breast!

Lyntie smiles a blushing bride,
Sybrant joyous at her side,
Seems not earth an Eden bright
To their cloudless, blissful sight?

XXXVIII.

Amid the pleasure-seeking band,
Gayest, the faithless sentries stand;
As loudly rings the bridal cheer
One whispers in the other's ear,
"Sure comrade, this is better fate,
Than holding musket at a gate!
Let the frost sting—the wind rush by!
Our shapes of snow can both defy.
Our captain, trust me, comes not forth
To face this blustering of the North,
And in the gloom, no eye can tell
Image of snow from sentinel!
Black Brom, with nimble elbow, brings

Feet-lifting music from his strings;
Come to the dance, and let us spend
The hours, until our watch shall end.”

XXXIX.

Forth from the howling forests, slow,
 Stemming the fury of the blast,
Dark throngs are striving through the snow,
 They reach the palisade at last.
Each knife is bar'd, each musket grasp'd,
For strength renew'd the breath is gasp'd,
Amidst its drifts the gate, wide spread,
Seems to invite the entering tread,
On—ha, a sentry here! but no!
The hatchet sinks in shapen'd snow;
Quick, through the passage, rush the band,
Quick they divide on every hand;
Lonely and trackless are the streets
 Block'd with deep banks—no light—no sound

Within the dwellings, group'd around.
The wind, about each corner, beats,
Whirling the drifts in blinding sheets;
Montigni leads—a light breaks near,
The hunters bending o'er their cheer!
Another streaks with bronze a pine,
Fast slumbering trader, it is thine!
Mantet draws near the fort—within
Loud swells the reckless wassail-din!
La Moyne beside a window stoops,
Merrily step the dancing groups!
Till round each roof-tree is the foe:
With weapons ready for the blow.

XL.

One moment more—still deep the cheer!
Still runs the dream its wild career!
Still flows the wine-cup free and red!
And still to music bounds the tread!

While every other fabric seems
Cast in the solemn spell of dreams:
The next; more fierce, more terrible
Than the wild tempest's wildest swell
So blended that they seem one yell

The war-whoops burst upon the scene:
A thousand frightened eagles, driven
From eyrie-peaks by lightnings riven,
A thousand madden'd panthers, dashing
Midst forest-fires all round them flashing,
Awake not sounds more wild and keen,
Than those that rend and pierce the air,
Now here—now there—now everywhere
Quick swell on swell—as though had risen
The loosen'd demons from their prison
To howl and riot through the night,
And, mingling with those horrid cries,
Crashings of door and casement rise
With shrieks of agony and fright:

Woe, to the death surrounded, woe!
In vain the rushings to and fro!
In vain the flight!—the hatchet's blow
The knife's quick plunge—the crimson flow
The heavy fall—the triumph yell
The scream, the groan, sad havoc tell.
La Moyne, in headlong fury, dashes
 With his wild band, amidst the dance.
His eye, in stern, triumphant flashes
 Meets Lyntie's terror-stricken glance;
He hears her shriek through ringing whoops,
He sees her form through struggling groups,
Sybrant is at her side, with knife
Torn from a savage in the strife,
Deadly and quick the blade is gleaming,
But blood from many a wound is streaming,
La Moyne has reach'd them—lifted high
 His hatchet sinks—as Sybrant gasps
Dying beneath, with eager cry

Lyntie's crouch'd swooning form, he grasps.
He bears her to the door, but dash'd
Asunder by the rushing crowd—
A wandering tomahawk has flash'd—
Again her shriek rings wild and loud,
Her blood is gushing red and fast,
A quivering sigh—it is her last.
Motionless stands La Moyne, about
Flash torch and steel, swell scream and shout,
Motionless stands he, where, oh where
His lawless hopes—his passion burning,
To the fierce writhings of despair,
To everlasting curses, turning!
For this, through weary days, his feet
The boundless winter snows had beat,
For this, his hand has help'd to send
The bolt on those that call'd him friend,
The cloud has melted at his breath!
He grasp'd at bliss and finds but death!

XLI.

Fiercer, the tide of slaughter swells,
Fast plies the torch, wild burst the yells,
The war-whoop fills the trader's ear,
 He sees, just waken'd from his dream,
 The Caughnewaga's eye-balls gleam.
Up as he starts in shuddering fear,
Down falls the cold, keen, searching knife,
 And weltering in his couch of red
He feels amidst his gasps for life,
 The clutch'd scalp peeling from his head.
The hunters to their rifles bound—
In vain—in vain—the foe is round!
Quick arms the tomahawk are flinging,
The musket loud and fast is ringing,
Dark figures, at their throats, are springing,
 Woe to the struggling hunters, woe!
At dawn, the trotting moose may speed,
The deer in laurel thickets feed,

And the wolf sleep—with nought to heed,
They, who so oft had made them bleed,
The coverts, never more shall know.

XLII.

High towers the smoke—fierce burst the flames,
Down crash in heaps the dwelling frames,
Fearfully black, the sky scowls o'er,
Fearfully bright, the fire-floods pour
Their splendor; while like sable walls,
Around the close horizon falls.
Red embers mix with showering flakes,
Shrieks rise, roofs sink, forms struggle past,
And the shrill quavering war-whoop shakes
In peals upon the howling blast.
Here aims Montigni's musket—there
Red Agnier's hatchet cuts the air,
D'Iberville's tread is told by screams,
The knife of Repentigni gleams,

The mother, at the shiver'd door
Dying, beholds her infant, dash'd
In shrieks, upon the groaning floor
Smear'd with crush'd brain—with life-blood splash'd;
Sons sink beside their gray-hair'd sires,
Sister, by brother, bleeding lies,
While louder roar the raging fires
And blacker scowl the stormy skies.

XLIII.

The high debauch had higher swell'd,
Brimm'd to the lip the wine was held,
Hark! the first whoop! the scout turns pale,
Another quavers on the gale
Arm! arm, the savage comes! too late!
The foe is bursting through the gate,
Stern Mantet, with his yelling horde,
Bounds on the wild recoiling board,

Halberd meets hatchet, bayonet, knife,
But vain the struggle—short the strife!
Lock'd in stern throttle to the last,
The scout, beneath his foe, was cast,
Each, who so late, the goblet drain'd,
Fell by the danger he disdain'd;
But, scorning mercy in his pride,
Each strove and struggled till he died.

XLIV.

On, on, the torrent rolls its wrecks,
But now its might a barrier checks.
From a strong fort-like dwelling, dart
Quick streaks of death; with dauntless heart
Vrooman is there, his hearth to save,
Or, in its ruins, find his grave.
Shrill peal the whoops around his walls,
But at each shot, a foeman falls,

Pours, from without, the leaden rain,
He hurls the death ball back again:
From loop to loop he quickly bounds,
Quickly his fatal musket sounds,
In the fierce fire-flood's lurid glow
Reddening, all round, like blood, the snow,
The grim and threatening looks, he sees,
Of his barr'd, furious enemies,
Some, at the loops, aim fruitless ball,
Some shake the door-bolts, but to fall,
He marks their gestures wild with rage,
But still his shots the contest wage:
Thus on he strives—the smoke clouds fill
Each stifling room—he struggles still:
Ha! is yon door ajar! he flies—
A shriek—his wife beside him dies.
With madden'd strength, he dashes back
An entering savage on his track:
Again his bullets smite his foes,

Again the door defies their blows:
He starts—is that his daughter speeding
 Bearing his infant? back! but vain—
 He hears a sudden cry of pain—
Down dash'd, his mangled child is bleeding.
Yet dauntless, he, the fight prolongs,
Till, spent with toil, the baffled throngs
 As the foil'd panther slow withdraws
 Growling, from oft repeated leaps,
 Leave him, proud meed all efforts worth!
With fame that still tradition keeps,
 A conqueror at his household hearth!
A victor in a holy cause!

XLV.

Many, meanwhile, had sought to win
Safety, the forest-depths within ;
Half-clad—each snowflake stings afresh

Their bleeding, raw, yet freezing flesh,
Now, in the hollows, plunging deep,
Now, through the twin'd swamp, forc'd to creep,
The roof-flames touching into grim
And spectral shapes, trunk, stump and limb;
Frequent, from cave and thicket-lair,
They hear deep growls—see eye-balls glare,
Dark gliding figures cross their way
Howling and gnashing for their prey,
Whilst now and then, shrieks, blending dread

With snarls and clicking teeth, denote
Some doom'd wretch, from his torpid bed,
Waking, with wolf-fangs at his throat.

But on they press, for yells and screams,
Borne wildly by the raging wind,
And the doom'd hamlet's burning gleams
Tell, that destruction is behind.

XLVI.

The lingering morning dawn'd at last;
Bright wheel'd the sun the mountains o'er,
Away, the furious storm had pass'd,
Nature, in quiet, slept once more.
Stainless the sky, save where one spot
Spread o'er the blue, a darkening blot,
As though a frowning demon hover'd
Above a scene his blight had cover'd;
The foe was gone, but sad, oh, sad
The scenes, of late, so bright and glad;
There, were charr'd beam, and blacken'd wall,
And rafter tottering to its fall,
Here, a pale waste of ashes, there
Coals kindling in the keen cold air:
Fragments, half burn'd, of door, and shed,
And household things, around were spread,
From some, the flames yet fitful broke,
Slowly from others ooz'd the smoke;

Upon the hard stamp'd snow, smirch'd o'er
With mingled stains of soot and gore,
Heaps of gash'd mangled limbs were strew'd,
By blood and frost together glued,
Amidst the fortress-ruins lay
Wrecks of crush'd forms, in sad array,
All scorch'd and blacken'd with the flame
That had not paused its prey to claim;
Vrooman's strong blockhouse still arose,
Spar'd to his valor by his foes,
And still the church its fabric rais'd,
Its firm stone walls with smoke o'erglaz'd,
With a few roofs, that, scatter'd round,
Protection from the torch had found.

XLVII.

At length, a wretched throng, toil-spent
With the night's freezing banishment,

Came crouching through the woods, but nought
Of life, was in the scene they sought;
All, all was lone and silent there,
Death, grimly frowning with despair.
Yet not despair—a holy strength
Enters their bleeding hearts, at length;
Within those sacred walls, unriven,
As though to point the soul to heaven,
They breathe the solemn prayer, and raise
In thankful strains, the song of praise,
To Him—the Holy One, above,
 Who gives and takes in wisest might,
Who chastens in His tender love,
 Who is the Way—the Truth—the Light.

XLVIII.

Quickly, the forest region through,
The tidings of the slaughter flew;

Tionondaga's wigwams, where
The sparkling Mohawk waters marry
The bright, the beautiful Schoharie
Sent shouts of vengeance on the air:
Smok'd is the council calumet,
The blazon'd battlepost is set,
Each robe is mark'd with hostile types,
The war-paint shows its gleaming stripes,
And bounding fiercely in the ring,
Hatchet and club wild brandishing,
Each savage rocks, with stamping feet
To guttural song, and drum's dead beat,
Now, front to front, they swing, and wield
Their weapons, as in battle-field,
Plunging the knife—the hatchet swaying,
Feature and limb convulsive playing,
Till, at the short shrill whoop, again
Each follows each, in circling train.

XLIX.

The war dance o'er, each warrior speeds,
His mind but one fierce vengeful thought,
Upon the stealthy trail that leads
To where the late dark deeds were wrought.

L.

The hardy colonists too rose
To follow the retreating foes ;
The rifle from its nook was taken,
The axe lay on its pile forsaken,
The mountain, down the hunter, sent,
The settler from his clearing went,
The shingle-weaver left his camp,
The glen's snow show'd the woodman's tramp,
The lumberer chain'd his jarring mill,
Each busy haunt was lone and still,

As all, with bosoms firm and true,
Quick gather'd to the rendezvous.

LI.

Winter's wild voice was in the woods,

His ermine robe o'er all was cast,

But quickly through the solitudes

The rous'd and stern Avengers pass'd;

Houndlike, the foe's trail, tracking swift,

• They laugh'd to scorn the blast and drift.

And well amidst the fleeing band,

Hatchet and musket, knife and blade

With reckless and unsparing hand

The midnight massacre repaid.

Long did the memory of that trail

Turn the fierce Caughnewaga pale,

When, boasting in the lodge and dance,

His fiendish deeds of blood and flame,

O'er his wild mind, in transient glance,

The horrors of that vengeance came,

And long did ruthless Frontenac
Remember the invader's blow
Though striking deep, is beaten back,
By right, in two-fold force and woe.

LII.

But oh ! though on La Moyne fell not
Quick vengeance; yet all aftertime
Made his dark life a dreary lot,
The fearful meed for fearful crime!
A wandering miserable man—
He liv'd beneath a blighting ban;
And when the vulture ceas'd to gnaw
His bleeding heart, where cedars join
Their gloomy shades of shuddering awe,
In a deep chasm, was laid La Moyne.
And when too, winds and melting snows
Had swept the bones from their repose,

The hollow echoed to the cries
Of wolves, fierce fighting for their prize.

LIII.

Amid a soft and sylvan scene,
Where the light graceful willow wept,
And roses drap'd a fairy screen,
Sybrant and Lyntie sweetly slept.
In vernal days the robin made
Her nest within the budding shade;
When glow'd the moon-crown'd summer night
The mounds were bath'd in holy light,
Rich autumn shower'd his dyes, and shed
His hazy sunshine o'er the dead,
And pure smooth robes e'en winter gave
To deck and guard each peaceful grave.

LV.

And now the pine, whose mighty life
Was green, in that wild winter night,
Not two short hundred rings have twin'd;
The eagle, that when rose the strife,
From his steep eyrie wheel'd his flight,
Still launches vigorous on the wind ;
The mountains still uprear their sides ;
Below, the lovely river glides;
But oh, the scene how chang'd! how bright
The valley with its sloping belts—
How wide beneath the gazer's sight
The glorious landscape smiles, and melts;
Green wave-like meadows, here, are spread,
There, woodland shades are sweetly shed,
In deepening gold, there glows the wheat,
And there the rye-field's vying sheet,
Rich honied odors, here, are borne
From buckwheat blooms by breezes kiss'd,

There, furrow'd ranks of tassel'd corn

Fade greenly in the summer mist:

Where stood grim fort and palisade,

Thick roofs and spires are now display'd;

Where whoops arose, and life-blood flow'd,

Steam shoots along its iron road;

Where frown'd the forest wide and dark,

The smooth canal now bears its ark;

And round, in myriad numbers, press

The signs of peace and plenteousness.

NOTE.

At the breaking out of hostilities between France and England in 1690, Frontenac, Governor of Canada, despatched three expeditions, one destined against New-York, one against New-Hampshire, and one against Maine. That destined against New-York, was composed of about two hundred French, of whom Mantet, La Moyne, Montigni and Repentigni were officers, and fifty Caughnewaga Indians led by the Great Agnier, all wearing the paint and dress of the natives. After a twenty-two days' march of the greatest hardship, through wild and continuous forests, blocked with the snows of a northern winter, beating their path by the aid of snow shoes, the party on the morning of the 8th of February, 1690, came to within a few miles of Schenectady, then the frontier post of New-York.

The hostile operations of the expedition had been originally designed against Albany, but the plan being changed, scouts were sent forward to reconnoitre Schenectady, which was now determined upon as the point of attack. The inhabitants relying upon the immense tract of snowy wilderness that lay between themselves and Quebec, and the severity of the season, entertained no apprehension of danger, and the scouts entered the village, without molestation or even exciting suspicion. Although the place was surrounded by a palisade, and maintained a garrison, the gates of the former were left continually open, and the soldiers of the latter kept but a relaxed and inefficient guard.

The night of the 8th fell with a strong tempest of wind and snow. Such was the security felt, that the sentinels, whose duty it was to guard the two gates with which the palisade was pierced, stationed images of snow at their posts, and went to a wedding that took place that evening. At midnight the French and Indians stole from their covert and entered the village through one of the open gates without obstruction. Dividing themselves into small parties they sur-

rounded and set fire to almost every dwelling, and waged indiscriminate slaughter amidst the surprised and unguarded inhabitants. The garrison was forced and after a feeble resistance, the soldiers were destroyed and the fort burned.

The only effectual defence was made by Adam Vrooman, who, from his dwelling, returned the fire of the enemy with fatal effect and although he saw his wife and child perish in the conflict, persevered in his resistance until he not only succeeded in repelling his assailants, but extorted from them a promise, if he would cease from his efforts, that his life should be saved, and his building spared from the flames, which promise was performed.

A few of the villagers, escaping from the fury of the onset fled into the forest, and with several Mohawk Indians who happened to be in the place, and whose lives were protected through the policy of the French, carried the first news of the massacre throughout the adjoining country. The Indian settlement at the confluence of the Mohawk river with the Schoharie creek sent their warriors who, joined by the white inhabitants scattered through the wild region, struck the trail of the retreating enemies, and amply revenged by the slaughter of a large number of the invaders, the inhuman barbarities perpetrated at Schenectady.

POEMS.

“SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND.”

A fair young girl, one golden summer day
Was wandering through a wood. The two whose love
Guided the tottering steps of infancy,
Had gone on high to wear bright wings and raise
Sweet anthems with the angels ; she was left
The world's wild tempests to sustain alone.
Yet had her mind been fill'd with love for God,
Taught that He e'er was present, that His eye
Look'd always on her, and His holy arm
Circled her in protection : and when Death
Was fastening heavenward pinions to the one
The last to leave her, as a mother's voice
Trembled upon her ear, she heard in awe,
Heard as her tears fell fast, that voice implore
The Father, Him who reigns in highest heaven,
To look upon the helpless child on earth,

And guide, and guard and bless her. Since that hour
Oh ! ever after, did her childish heart
Thrill and hush deep within itself, as thought
Wafted that death-bed scene, and in her ear
That sad, sad voice was whisper'd. She had look'd
In the soft twilight, hour of balm and dew,
In the deep night magnificent with stars,
In golden morn, and in the gorgeous set
Of the proud sun, and ask'd in prayer for God,
For God, her Father! and, oh blessed thought!
The Father of the lov'd ones pass'd away.
But nought, oh nought had met her eye or ear
To tell her of His presence. She was sad.
Her footsteps now were straying in the bright
And glorious summer noontide. Fresh and green
The leaves hung round her; overhead the sky
Seem'd one bright smile ; rich streaks of sunshine
glanc'd,
Like pointing fingers through the crowded stems,
And little birds, with soft ton'd songs that seem'd

Tun'd for her ear, flew round her ; tiny flowers
Wooing her touch were nestling in their nooks,
And all was peace and beauty. On a mound
Sloping like velvet, sank her girlish form.
Soft murmurs in the grass, a purling voice
In the near rill, a low deep organ tone
Thrilling the pine tree, lull'd each sense, and sleep
Glided across her with its downy touch.
The ground bird tripp'd beside and look'd askance
Then whirr'd away. The squirrel gaz'd and bark'd,
And leap'd into its bush. A straying fawn
Bleated in fear as his large staring eye
Met the prone form, and still she slumber'd on.
A sweet, sweet dream enchain'd her : in her view
Two radiant shapes, around which sparkled still
The light that flashes from the "great white throne,"
Stood, every moment brightening, and soft sounds
Like far-off echoes, crept upon her ear.
The pure forms pointed round—the melting tones

Bade her eyes open and behold her God :
Just then a robin lit upon the pine
Pouring a gush of music, and she woke.
A mist seem'd vanishing from her eye—a veil
Seem'd waving from her mind. She look'd—a light
Steady and clear, stream'd broad within her heart,
And she saw God. Yes! God was in the sky
Cloudless and bright above her; in the flower
That breath'd beneath; in the rich finger'd gold
Of the slant sunshine; in the emerald leaves
O'er canopied : His voice was in the grass
Murmuring around—the stream and organ pine;
And bending low her knee and shedding tears
More sweet and soothing than she e'er had known
She lifted up her childish voice and pray'd.

ANGLING.

The south wind is breathing most sweetly to-day,
The sunshine is veil'd in a mantle of gray,
The Spring rains are past, and the streams leap along
Not brimming nor shrunken, with sparkle and song,
'Tis the month lov'd by anglers—'tis beautiful June!—
Away then, away then, to bright Callikoon!

A narrow wild path through the forest is here,
With light tiny hoof-prints, the trail of the deer!
Beside and above us, what splendor of green!
The eye can scarce pierce the dense branches between,
How lightly this moss-hillock yields to the foot!
How gnarl'd is yon bough, and how twisted that root!
What white and pink clusters the laurel hangs out,
The air one deep hum from the bees all about!

The chestnut—'tis gala day with her—behold
Her leaves nearly cover'd with plumage of gold!
Whilst thick in the depths of the coverts below,
The blackberry blossoms are scatter'd like snow.
High up, the brown thresher is tuning her lay,
The red crested woodpecker hammers away,
The caw of the crow echoes hoarse from the tops,
The horn of the locust swells shrilly and stops,
While knots of bright butterflies flutter around,
And seeks the strip'd squirrel his cave in the ground.

We break from the tree-groups; a glade deep with grass;
The white clover's breath loads the sense as we pass,
A sparkle—a streak—a broad glitter is seen
The bright Callikoon through its thickets of green!
We rush to the banks—its sweet music we hear,
Its gush, dash and gurgle all blent to the ear,
No shadows are drawn by the cloud-cover'd sun,

We plunge in the chrystal, our sport is begun.
Our line where that ripple shoots onward, we throw,
It sweeps to the foam-spangled eddy below,
A tremor—a pull—the trout upward is thrown,
He swings to our basket—the prize is our own.

We pass the still shallows—a plunge at our side—
The dive of the muskrat, its terror to hide.
A clamor is heard, spots are darting from sight—
The duck with her brood speeding on in affright.
A rush—the quick water-snipe cleaving the air—
We pass the still shallows—our prey is not there.

But here, where the trunk stretches half o'er the brook,
And slumbers the pool in a leaf-shadow'd nook,
Where eddies are dimpling and circling away,
Steal gently, for here lies the king of our prey.
Throw stilly—if greater the sound meets his ear

Than the burst of a bubble, you strike him with fear:
How cautious his touch of the death-hiding bait,
The rod now is trembling; wait! patiently wait!
A pull—raise your line, yet most gently—'twill bring
The credulous victim more sure to his spring,
A jerk, and the angle is bent to its length, [strength!
Play the line from the reel or 'twill break with his
He darts round in foam, but his vigor is past,
Draw steadily to you—you'll have him at last!
Raise up, but beware that strong struggle and gasp,
And the noble snar'd creature is filling your grasp.
How bright with the water-gloss glitters the pride
Of his brown clouded back, red and gold spotted side!
But we leave the reft scene of the dead monarch's reign
Like a despot that moves on to triumph again.

The voice of the rapid now burthens the air,
Approach, for our prey's crowded city is there!

Here whirlpools, there eddies, here stillness, there foam,
We ply well our efforts—no further we roam.
Our baskets we fill, but our muscles are tired,
And a shade in the sky tells that day has expired;
The robin has chaunted his vespers and flown;
The frog from the creek has commenc'd his trombone;
The spider has ceas'd his slight furrow to show;
The brown sprawling shrimp seeks the pebbles below;
The bank then we clamber, our home-path resume,
The torch-bearing fire-fly to lighten the gloom,
And dreams of our sleep-fetter'd pillow restore
Our day-sport, distorted but pleasing, once more.

FAITH.

If that high faith, whose holy beam,
The future's midnight, turns to day,
Be but delusion's feverish dream,
Returning reason sweeps away,
Oh who could nerve against despair,
When storms surround the staggering bark!
Oh who his wearying burthens bear
Along a path so cold and dark !

The keen regret—the wasting grief,
The tears that make life's daily showers,
Oh where from these, could come relief !
Oh where ! if that dark creed was ours!
Better at once to end our pain,
In the hush'd grave our sorrows cast,

Then drag along a galling chain
And have no goal to reach at last.

But if that Faith that heavenward glows,
Sheds on our hearts its radiance clear,
Then come, oh Earth! with all thy woes!
We care not for our trials here.
The soul, the soul can never die,
Away all clouds will soon be driven,
Its goal is yonder glorious sky,
Its everlasting home is heaven.

THE FORSAKEN ROAD.

In the deep shadows of the wilderness,
Arbor'd by branches a forsaken road
Winds on in two faint wheel-marks: striping now
The soft black mould, now hidden by the leaves
Dropp'd at the breath of Autumn, seaming here
The hollow wet with oozing springs, and there
Trac'd lightly on the firm and level glade.
Now it is lost within a sward of grass
Spread pleasantly, with scatter'd groups of trees,
A place to lie in, when the summer sun
Throws broken gold; thence winds it through the shade,
With time-stain'd blazes on the thronging trunks
Slic'd either hand. Within the densest spot,
A pine has stretch'd its giant barricade,
Bulging with knots and fork'd with splinter'd twigs,
The shroud-like moss o'ermantling; as it lies

So motionless, so powerless in decay,
I start to think its shatter'd summit once
Flaunted its daring challenge to the storm
And told its fall in thunder. Still the wreck
Hath pleasant uses; its high twining roots
Are chambers for the squirrel, and its frame
Keeps bare a stripe of mossy nut-strew'd earth
From the white drift that blocks the opposite side,
So that the tenants of the base might steal
In the brief glimpses of the winter sun
To find the scatter'd treasures.

Onward still

I trace the road; tall saplings in the midst,
Then tawny grain-crack'd fragments, crumbling fine
As my foot sinks within them, then a mound
Of the sweet low-stemm'd wintergreen, a bridge
Of logs then lying crosswise o'er a stream,
Gaping with chasms and tottering dank with age
A frail support ; until the stone pil'd wall

Cuts sharp across, and smiling farm-fields hide
All traces of the pathway.

As I tread

The lonely road, now scaring with my steps
The whizzing partridge, hushing with my form
The thresher's song, and baring with my knife
The darken'd hack o'erlaid with bark and rings
That years have circled, I give rein to thought,
And images throng round me. First the deer
Seeking the lick, leaves prints: the midnight wolf
Scenting his prey, tramps o'er: the red man fierce,
Treads in the faint but noted marks, lest moss
And mould should show his trail. In after years
His compass the surveyor stakes, and carves
Rude letters on the trees that, gifted thus
With language, tell the windings of the way.
And then the emigrant's huge wagon-tent
Gleams white between the trunks, with household goods,
Pil'd in and dangling round, and midst them group'd

Childhood and matron age, the flock and herd
Straggling behind, the patriarch and his sons
Loitering before with axes, hewing wide
The underbrush, and bridging o'er the streams,
And kindling in the dell, when frowns the night,
Their bivouac for slumber.

Then with toil

The settler trudges o'er, his shoulders bent
Beneath his burthen from the distant mill,
To feed his famishing children. And as Time
Smooths the rough clearing to the smiling field,
The heavy wagon jolts across the roots
To the far market, and the tardy wheel
Therefrom bears loads of rustic merchandize.
And then as scatter'd walls of logs are merg'd
Into thick village roofs, the forest road
Is left, for the smooth spacious thoroughfare
Linking the hamlet to the river-side.

How like this lonely road, the track of life!
Our infant steps are Fear's. Dark Cruelty
And fierce Revenge then tread upon their way;
Till later Reason's compass points our course,
Marking the path with prudence. Daring Hope
The Pioneer, its bosom freighted deep
With all our feelings, follows; hewing down
The barriers with the edge of energy,
Bridging o'er Fortune's many adverse streams,
And lighting sorrow's frequent night with flame
Of solace till the morrow. Trials come—
Endurance hath succeeded Hope, and still
We tread beneath the burthens of our care,
For those we love are cherish'd. Then as home
Brightens to comfort; in our daily path
We reap reward of hardship; and as joys
Cluster around us, the smooth easy path
Of peaceful being leads us to the grave;
And the rough early road is shunn'd, for Time

To shroud its varied surface from our thoughts;
With proud Ambition lying prone across,
A dead and shatter'd wreck; yet sheltering close
(Its fragments turn'd by dire experience
To holier use than when it stood erect,)
By stern remembrance of its miseries,
Its wrestling warfare and its rending fall,
Home feelings, and the gentle ties of love
From perishing in the snow drift of the world.

DEER SHOOTING.

The east is now dappled with dawning of light,
To the woods for the deer e'er the sun is in sight!
The white frost has spread its fresh silver-like veil,
And if a hoof passes, it tells us the tale,
The hound in swift gambols darts hither and yon,
We shoulder our rifles and rapidly on.

Each limb how elastic, how bracing the air!
Hurrah, boys, what know we of sorrow or care!
Our veins tingle wild with delight, as we feel
The breath of the autumn morn over us steal;
The herds to their pastures are wending along,
And hark! the first robin has burst into song!
The hawk leaves the pine, in slow circles to sail,
And in the brown stubble field whistles the quail:

Tread faster! for now the deer glides from the shade
To drink at the streamlet, and feed in the glade,
If longer we loiter, we'll seek him in vain,
He'll soon make his couch in the thickets again.

His haunts we approach; creep on cautious and slow,
The stir of a branch our dread presence will show,
His haunts we approach; scan the glade-grass, and look
For his prints in the soft oozy marge of the brook,
Here's a dash of the moss from the rock; there has sunk
His hoof in the brown brittle dust of the trunk;
Lead the hound to yon thicket! these tracks all around
Proclaim that the runway at last we have found.

His rich rainbow banner hath Autumn unroll'd,
The woods blaze in splendors of crimson and gold,
The leaves cutting sharp on the soft sapphire sky

Are clusters of jewels suspended on high,
The dream-like and delicate light melting through
Seems chang'd where it falls to an opal-like hue,
So vivid and brilliant the colors that glow
On the undergrowth spread, like a carpet, below;
With canopy o'er, rich as monarch could claim,
And rifle on shoulder I wait for the game.
As breathings I hold, the hound's music to hear,
The trickle of waters comes meek to my ear;
His hollow-ton'd trill the dark cricket repeats;
Like watch-ticks, the spider's quick regular beats;
And in contrast, the glee of the grasshopper-throng,
With the catydid's solemn monotonous song;
Then wearied with listening, I smile as, in ire
The milksnake out-launches his prong'd tongue of fire,
And on the prone beech, the coxcombical crow
Struts lordly, as if his black plumage to show;
But hark to that sound stealing faint through the wood!
Heart hammers, breath thickens, swift rushes the blood!

It swells from the thicket more loud and more near
Tis the hound giving tongue! he is driving the deer!
My rifle is levell'd—swift tramlings are heard—
A rustle of leaves—then, with flight like a bird,
His antlers thrown back, and his body in motion
With quick rise and fall like a surge of the ocean—
His eyeballs wide rolling in frenzied affright—
Outbursts the magnificent creature to sight.
A low cry I utter; he stops—bends his head,
His nostrils distended, limbs quaking with dread;
My rifle cracks sharp—he springs wildly on high,
Then pitches down headlong, to quiver and die.

On the trail now comes, leaping and panting, the hound,
And I hear the shrill whoop of my comrade resound;
Upwheels the broad sun—his fresh, joy giving light
The innermost depths, striking quick into sight,
A twitter and flutter awake in the trees,

The stream casts its white curling breath to the breeze;
As under our burthen we stagger along
The sociable wren bids good morrow in song,
But the chatterbox squirrel is swelling with wrath
And stamping, lets drop his brown nuts in our path,
We heed not his antics, but trudge on amain,
And stand, spent with toil, at our threshold again.

HOME.

Home of the soul! thy light appears
A star to guide man's gloomy way,
When, pilgrim in this waste of years,
His faltering step is turn'd astray;
Hope lends her pinions to his feet,
Faith sheds its balm within his breast,
And tireless, on he speeds to greet
Prize of his toils! the goal of rest.

Darkly the night hath frown'd on high,
Roughly the path before hath spread,
And the fierce tempest, sweeping by,
Hath beat upon the wanderer's head.
But through the night, streams, pure and warm
Upon the path, a pointing ray,

A hand is with him in the storm,
To lead and guard, console and stay.

Oh who would linger here, when Home
Hath bliss that Fancy never drew!
Oh why should footstep ever roam!
When heaven shines o'er our mental view!
Home, glorious Home! earth's darkest sky
And stormiest path, we calmly brave,
For the bright wafting wings that lie
In waiting, for us, at the grave.

SPEARING.

The lake's gold and purple has vanish'd from sight,
The glimmer of twilight is merg'd into night,
The woods on the borders, in blackness are mass'd,
The waters in motionless ebony glass'd,
The stars that first spangled the pearl of the west
Are lost in the bright blazing crowds of the rest;
Light the torch!—launch the boat!—for to night we
are here,
The salmon, the quick-darting salmon, to spear.

We urge our light craft by the push of the oar
Through the serpent-like stems of the lilies near shore,
We turn the sharp prow at yon crescent-shap'd cove,
Made black by the down-hanging boughs of its grove;
The meek eddy-gurgle that whirls at our dip,
Sounds low as the wine-bead which bursts on the lip,

On the lake, from the flame of our torch, we behold
A pyramid pictur'd in spangles of gold ;
The marble-like depths on each side of the blaze
Are full of gray sparkles, far in as we gaze;
The loon from his nook in the bank, sends a cry,
The night-hawk darts down, with a rush, through the
sky,

In gutturals hoarse, on his green slimy log
To his shrill piping tribe, croaks the patriarch frog,
And bleat, low, and bark, from the banks, mingle faint
With the anchorite whippoorwill's mournful complaint.

We glide in the cove—let the torch be flar'd low!
The spot where our victim is lurking, 'twill show,
Midst the twigs of this dead sunken tree-top he lies,
Poise, comrade, your spear! or farewell to our prize!
It darts—to the blow his best efforts are bent,
A white bubbling streak shows its rapid descent,
He grasps it as upward it shoots through the air,

Three cheers for our luck!—the barb'd victim is there!
Give way boys! give way boys! our prow points to
shore,

Give way boys! give way boys! our labor is o'er.
As the black mass of forest our torch-light receives,
It breaks into groups of trunks, branches and leaves:
Low perch'd on the hemlock, we've blinded with light
Yon gray-headed owl!—see him flutter from sight!
And the orator frog, as we glide with our glow,
Stops his speech with a groan, and dives splashing
below,

One long and strong pull—the prow grates on the sand,
Three cheers for our luck, boys! as spring we to land.

MOONLIGHT.

From her blue, sky-thron'd height
The moon looks down upon the silent scene,
Changing the gloom of night
To sparkling silver, with her magic sheen.

A solitary cloud
Steals o'er her orb which paints a halo there,
On floats the transient shroud
Curls by that star-gem, and dissolves in air.

Yon lofty mountain-pile
Prints its dark shadow on the glittering ground,
Its peak, like some far isle
Looming o'er billowy vapors wreath'd around.

Within the templed wood
I wander lone; sublimely still it stands
Enshrin'd to solitude,
A green majestic fane "not made with hands."

There frowns Night's blackest hue—
And there a gleam is shot along the grass
Seeming to Fancy's view,
Spread for the fairies of the spot to pass.

Moonlight!—it hath a spell
Of memory like low music heard in sleep,
Visions too bright to dwell,
And thoughts that come and sadden till we weep.

And blest, oh blest those tears!
The present's stern realities depart:

And other, happier years
Crowd, with their sweet old feelings, to the heart.

The cedar's pillar'd shade
Streaks the wild path; and steep'd in lustrous gloss,
Where spreads yon dewy glade,
Gleam on my eye, the thickets, grass and moss.

My grateful brow I bare
To the soft fragrant wind-kiss; in thy sight
The darkness of despair
Brightens to hope, oh pure and holy night!

These silver'd leaves and flowers—
Yon rich broad sky, God's mighty banner spread—
Mountain and forest-bowers—
A sacred awe upon my spirit shed.

One prayer, as low I kneel,
That when Death's night succeeds Life's stormy day,
My sin-freed soul may feel
A heaven-sent calmness as it glides away.

THE OLD BRIDGE.



Through a lone landscape, creeps a marshy stream:
Dead trees have fallen across, and wither'd twigs
Float on its stealing surface; where it shrinks
In narrowest line, the fragments of a bridge
Still stretch, though in decay. Its platform once
Of lopp'd pine saplings, two hew'd trunks sustain'd.
But now the point of one foundation-log
Slants deep within the mire, and not a trace
Is witness'd of the causeway.

When the bridge
Lay in its perfect shape,—foot, hoof and wheel
Pass'd o'er its sturdy frame, the forest twin'd
Its leafy bowers around, and through its vault
The bright bank-brimming streamlet merrily danc'd.
But the keen axe has swept its way amidst
The woodlands, leaving here and there a tree,
And summer suns have drank the streamlet's fount,
Until the waters filter through the marsh
On which the remnants rest midst pools of slime,
Grass-tufts like streaming hair, and sedges green
Pointing like daggers. But the ruin still
Has life and beauty round it, and itself
Forms to the eye a picture. Timid Spring
Smiles with her violet-eyes from mossy nooks,
And on its taper stem the lily hangs
Its snowy bell rich tongu'd with downy gold.
The chirping snipe alights and balances
Its gray-white shape; the woodcock darts in line
Upward at morn, but drops again at eve,

To feed upon the ooze beneath the logs.
One mighty pine, amidst the straggling trees,
Lifts its unchanging pyramid to heaven;
And when the sun is slant upon the scene,
The moss that clothes the fragments of the bridge
Glow like green velvet, the pine-top is bath'd
In golden lustre, whilst the streaming light
Touching the remnants, makes a broad bright track,
Between them, and the sunset-portals spread
As though to let the eye pierce through to heaven.

An emblem art thou, rude and moulder'd wreck!
Of Age decay'd and tottering. Strong in youth
Man bears his burthens; Life's green objects stand
In myriads round him, and his feelings glide
In pure unwasted brightness through his breast.
But Time's hand grasps his form; it, shatter'd, sinks:
Keen disappointment strikes the objects down
Until they lie in wrecks; his feelings shrink

Beneath the glare of fierce reality,
Until they creep amidst the slime and weeds
Of craft and selfishness: with broken frame,
Age rests then in the mire of slow decay.
But he is not forsaken: childhood smiles
Brightening his weary hours with merry looks;
Affection hangs above his couch of pain
A human blossom ; volatile youth draws near
Pleas'd with his presence; ardor oft forsakes
His counsel, soars aloft, but comes again
To learn new wisdom, e'er he wings afresh.
Midst the few scatter'd objects left to him,
One changeless hope looks upward to the sky.
And as Life's sun slants low, it touches him
With sanctity, illumines the towering hope
To more resplendent light, and makes the space
That separates from the portals of the grave,
A golden pathway between him and heaven.



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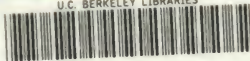
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